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Letter dated 27 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement of the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Colonel-General Safar Abiyev, made at the regular session of the Council of Ministers of Defence of the Commonwealth of Independent States, held in Dushanbe on 26 October 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Eldar **Kouliev**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 27 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Colonel-General Safar Abiyev, made at the regular session of the Council of Ministers of Defence of the Commonwealth of Independent States

I consider it essential to express the extreme anxiety of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the continuing large-scale deliveries of Russian arms and equipment to the Republic of Armenia.

This problem has been on the agenda for a number of years and is having an extremely negative effect on the situation in the whole Caucasus region.

The question of unsanctioned deliveries of Russian armaments valued at more than US$ 1 billion to Armenia during the period 1993-1996 has still not been resolved.

Azerbaijan has repeatedly appealed to the Russian Federation requesting that the issue be resolved, but we see no reciprocal movement from the Russian side. What is more, in recent years the Russian Federation has in addition been delivering modern weapons and equipment to Armenia and a new large-scale air-force group has been formed.

It is no secret to anyone that a significant proportion of the weapons and equipment delivered to Armenia is transferred to the Azerbaijani lands occupied by Armenia. As a direct result of this, Armenia has now concentrated a substantial quantity of arms and materiel in occupied Azerbaijani territory.

The Republic of Azerbaijan welcomes the agreements reached between Georgia and the Russian Federation at the Istanbul Summit to reduce the quantity of Russian arms and materiel located in Georgia, limited by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Treaty. We are watching closely the progress made in the bilateral Georgian-Russian talks on this question.

However, the transfer to Armenia of a significant quantity of the equipment brought from Georgia causes us serious concern.

Such actions by the Russian Federation undermine the already delicate situation in the region. Russian-Armenian military cooperation has come to represent a real threat for the whole of the southern Caucasus. Such actions are contrary to the norms and very spirit of the Commonwealth, create serious obstacles in the path of developing mutual understanding and cooperation and threaten security throughout the Commonwealth.

I consider that the lack of progress in solving this problem delays the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and is a negative factor for the authority of the Commonwealth of Independent States.